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Paper: Equity

Gender equality and the role of female journalists in Sri Lanka

Though traditionally journalism was a “male field,” today, most of the professional journalists are women. Irrespective of this quantitative increase, still an equal representation of female values and ideas in the media field cannot be observed.

The research problem is: What are the trends of gender equality and the role of female journalists in Sri Lanka?

The main hypothesis is that female journalists in Sri Lanka are harassed by the male dominance of the field.

This is an on-going research study. The methodology includes surveys, questionnaires, in-depth interviews, observation and documentary reviews (reports/relevant books/news papers/ details of the court cases) to test the hypothesis.

Results analyzed so far show that female journalists are mostly confined to traditional female areas like children’s and women’s programs. Opportunities of covering areas like sport, politics, defense, are not satisfactory. Female journalists should get equal opportunities in following aspects: promotions, job opportunities, reporting areas and assignments. Because of male dominance at the workplaces and physical and emotional anguish, females leave the profession. Promotions should be based on experience, productivity, talent and efficiency and not on gender. Interviews should be conducted in a transparent manner and should be gender equal in the composition of interview boards.

The expected outcome of this study is the ability to obtain an insight into a more equitable work environment for Sri Lankan female journalists

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